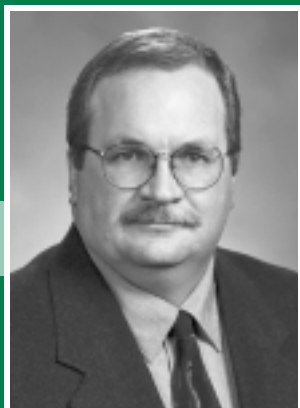




## 12th Legislative District

# 2003 Session Report



### Rep. Mike Armstrong

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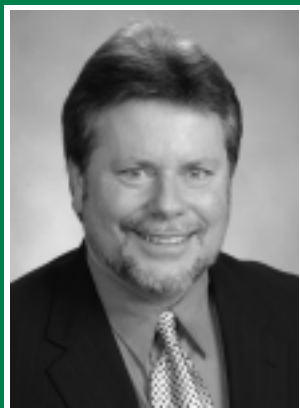
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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It's hard to believe but we're already in the thick of the 2003 session, and there are many **issues** that require immediate attention, including:

- filling Washington's \$2-plus billion budget hole;
- making Washington a better place to do business;
- improving the way state government does business, and;
- helping our state's people and goods move through Washington more safely and efficiently.

Our **goal** this year is to work in our respective House committees to address Washington's greatest needs. We'll balance working in cooperation with our fellow legislators and holding firm to your priorities; the areas of main concern to the local residents of Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Grant counties.

As we promote ideas for a **responsible budget** and vote on legislation, we'll stress government accountability, cost-savings and operating efficiencies instead of burdensome taxes and fee increases.

Between the two of us, we offer a **seasoned and fresh perspective** on how best to serve the 12<sup>th</sup> District in Olympia.

We encourage you to **email us** with information about how to contact you with updates. **Two-way communication** is the framework for involving you in the legislative process. We'll work from the grassroots of our communities to reach out and address local needs and create honest solutions. Together we can make a difference and help state government do a better job of responding to your needs.

Sincerely,

  
Mike Armstrong

  
Cary Condotta

# Representative Mike Armstrong

## Transportation solutions we can support:

Transportation is a big issue in this legislative session. I'm working with my colleagues on the House Transportation Committee to make sure we address Washington's problems from a *statewide* perspective. No aspect is more important than our ability to create and pass some type of statewide transportation solution. The alternative is dire: we can't allow the three big counties in Western Washington — King, Pierce and Snohomish — to pass a package that addresses only their issues and siphons all the funding for projects that won't mean a hill of beans to our communities. We anticipate a much smaller transportation package than R-51, and let's hope that we see something out of this session that folks from our locale can get behind. If we don't get the opportunity to vote on a bill that supports and addresses our entire state's transportation needs, I fear that we won't see any new projects in Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan counties in the foreseeable future.



## State government efficiencies:

As the Ranking Republican on the State Government Committee, I'm actively pushing nine regulatory reform bills that would help get state government under control, increase efficiencies and stop waste. This is particularly important given the very real and difficult budget problems we face:

- House Bill 1053, that passed unanimously out of the House, would measure the performance of state agencies to ensure they're operating as effectively and efficiently as possible and that taxpayers are getting what they paid for.
- House Bill 1303 would allow rural counties to remove themselves from the Growth Management Act and put the power back in local county and city governments to decide what's best for people and business.
- House Bill 1311 would place the burden of proof on the state agency when a rule is challenged and allow citizens to file legal action against the state in their home counties.
- House Bill 1307 would ensure state agencies don't go beyond the reasonable limits of what is asked of them by the Legislature. This would give citizens a stronger voice when state agencies adopt rules and regulations that have the force of law, and often come with enormous costs to citizens.
- House Bill 1184 would make state agencies leaner and more efficient, bring back a fair balance between management and frontline workers, and cut down on hefty management salaries that may not be deserved or that don't buy real services for the people of Washington.



***Rep. Armstrong explains the details of his performance audit bill to members of the media while fellow lawmakers look on.***



# Representative Cary Condotta

## A better business climate:

It's encouraging to see an acknowledgement from both sides of the political spectrum that our business climate isn't desirable or competitive. House Republicans believe government should step out of the way to make room for meaningful regulatory reforms.

On the House Commerce & Labor Committee, where I serve as Assistant Ranking Republican, we're looking at every aspect of our state's business climate and creating legislation that will make it more attractive to do business in Washington. From workers' compensation to unemployment insurance, nothing is escaping examination.

We can protect jobs by improving our state's business climate. But we must fix or repeal problem-causing policies, including tying the minimum wage rate to employment levels, repealing the ill-conceived ergonomics rule, and reducing the ever-increasing workers' compensation tax increase.



Limited revenues are a reality and impact efforts to balance the budget. We

shouldn't absorb into the public sector what is generating tax-driven revenues. I introduced House Bill 1730 to restrict new purchases of private land by public agencies.

More government engineering won't solve the problem either, so I sponsored House Bill 1534 that would reclaim our water rights with local needs and policies in mind. No longer would simply removing water from the Methow River constitute pollution.

Rebuilding our economy will take discipline. House Bill 1894 would reinstate stringent limits on state spending and make it harder for lawmakers to raise taxes.

Government should work in partnership with our state's employers to encourage economic progress. My goal is to ensure that our region's citizens have a voice in making it happen.



*Rep. Condotta reviews legislation on the House floor.*

## Get Washington's economy back on track:

On the House Trade & Economic Development Committee we're identifying areas that will help Washington weather our economic doldrums and come out stronger. Manufacturing, agriculture and technology top the list. Maintaining existing tax exemptions that foster high-wage employment sectors is one way we can help build our economy and protect jobs. The expansion of agriculture-related opportunities is another. Along with fellow Eastern Washington lawmakers on the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, we're emphasizing local priorities as we look for ways to stimulate growth.



# 2003 Session Report

## ■ Celebrating Washington

It's our privilege to sponsor House Bill 1370 that would establish an official song to celebrate Washington. Our legislation will designate the song, music and lyrics to "Washington My Homeland," composed by Cary J. Sand. Cary is the son of Ed and Mary Sand of East Wenatchee.

## ■ Hands off our electric rates

We enjoy the lowest electric rates in the country. Inexpensive electricity is the cornerstone of our region's economy. But House Democrats have introduced new legislation that would re-structure tax rates for our public utility district. If these measures are enacted, we anticipate a 25 to 40 percent increase in electric rates. We can't let these proposed power-rate increases slam private consumers and threaten economic recovery in Central Washington. This is not good legislation and we'll fight it as vigorously as we can.

## ■ Initiatives are not the problem

Instead of attempting to undercut the ability of Washingtonians to decide what's right for them through the initiative process, as some Democrats have proposed to do, we should focus on creating positive solutions for our state. Here in Olympia, we are watching legislation

in the House affecting the initiative process. So far, the only idea we've seen that makes sense is adding language about how much an initiative would cost. Otherwise, hands off this important process and let the people speak.



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